

**The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers**  
**Statement to National Hydropower Association Members**  
**May 11, 2009 Congressional Rally**  
**1324 Longworth House Office Building**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. It is good to see so many familiar faces and it is always good to meet new leaders in the hydropower world.

As many of you know, I represent Washington State's 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional district.

Like much of the Pacific Northwest, my district relies heavily on hydropower. In fact, in Washington State, nearly 80% of the electricity generated comes from clean emissions free hydropower.

And in these economic times, it is also important to note that the Pacific Northwest has some of the most affordable electricity rates in the country!

Who would have guessed that you can have clean, green, power, and do it affordably!

Yet there are many people and some of my colleagues here in Congress who continue to ignore the benefits of current hydropower and the opportunities that exist to expand the utilization of hydro.

I'm sure many of you have seen it – but the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) recently completed a report that indicated that hydropower capacity in the United States could be doubled without building a single new dam.

This would be achieved by upgrading and improving efficiency at existing hydro facilities and installing hydro at dams that currently do not produce hydro power.

Although most of us in this room are aware of these facts, many of my colleagues in Congress don't.

And this is the reason I decided to create the Congressional Hydropower Caucus.

I started this Caucus at the end of last Congress with the goal of simply educating my Colleagues about the benefits of hydropower.

The first briefing we did was named, "Hydropower 101" and focused on bringing Members and staff up to speed.

This year I plan to expand on our efforts from last year and discuss the role that hydro power plays in firming and shaping other renewable energy sources.

In addition to the caucus, I am the Ranking Member on the House Water and Power Subcommittee and have used this role to advocate for hydropower and educate my colleagues.

As you know, there is a strong, mobilized effort underway to find solutions to combat manmade global climate change and this can be seen in the Waxman-Markey legislation we hear so much about lately.

While I will save the climate change debate for another time, I would like to point out that we need to work together to remind Members in Congress that hydropower **MUST** be on the table when discussing potential solutions.

We can't afford to penalize those who have utilized emissions free hydropower for decades and that is what much of this legislation could do.

At a time when countries around the world are advancing hydro, we need to recognize that hydropower plays an important role in bringing wind, solar and other renewable energy sources online and that the Markey-Waxman legislation should recognize that.

We need to provide incentives for those who wish to pursue hydropower and we need to ensure that hydropower is not treated differently than any other renewable like wind and solar.

I will continue to advocate for these goals but I need help from all of you to do this.

I believe that we need to work together – to collaborate and deliver a clear message backed with sound information. We need to put forward solutions and point out the impacts of some of the negative proposals under consideration. \

To do this – we need the assistance of you individually – and then cohesively through the National Hydropower Association. Together our voice must get louder and stronger.

Then and only then – will we be able to look back and identify the causes that together we have advanced – and the ones we have rightfully thwarted.

With that, I say thank you for inviting me to join you and would like to open it up to a few questions.